

Message Text

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17-20
ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CCO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 /031 W
----- 049780

O R 211056Z NOV 73
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0604
INFO USINT CAIRO
USMISSION USUN NY

S E C R E T TEL AVIV 9391

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, XF, IS, US
SUBJECT: US POSTURE ON MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT

1. AT MY RECEPTION LAST EVENING FOR THE 29 CONGRESSMEN VISITING ISRAEL, I HAD A NUMBER OF KNESSET MEMBERS AND OTHER PROMINENT ISRAELIS PRESENT. SEVERAL OF THE ISRAELIS HAD JUST HEARD ISRAELI RADIO NEWS REPORT ABOUT SECRETARY'S MEETING YESTERDAY WITH SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, PARTICULARLY HIS REFERENCE TO A US SET OF PRINCIPLES FOR A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT.
 2. ACCORDING TO THE NEWS REPORT ISRAELIS HAD HEARD, SECRETARY WAS DESCRIBED AS HAVING TOLD COMMITTEE (OR NEWSMEN) THERE ARE THREE PARTICULARLY THORNY PROBLEMS RE MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT: BORDERS, JERUSALEM, AND PALESTINIANS. ISRAELIS WERE TAKEN ABACK THAT THIS ENUMERATION REPORTEDLY DID NOT INCLUDE: PEACE. DEPUTY TRANSPORT MINISTER YAACOB, PROMINENT HAWK (AND DAYAN CONFIDANT) IN LABOR PARTY, AND YORAM ARIDOR, LIKUD CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND KNESSET MEMBER, BOTH MADE POINT OF EXPRESSING CONCERN TO US THAT ABOVE NEWS REPORT MIGHT CONCEIVABLY REFLECT SHIFT IN US ATTITUDE ABOUT IMPORTANCE OF ACHIEVING REAL PEACE OR AT LEAST MIGHT BE SO READ BY ARABS.
 3. I REPORT ABOVE AS SYMPTOMATIC OF (A) HOW ISRAELIS CURRENTLY ARE HANGING ON EVERY US WORD, AND (B) HOW CRITICAL THE ISSUE
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OF PEACE IS FOR THEM. WHATEVER WAS ACTUAL SOURCE OF ISRAELI RADIO ITEM IS IRRELEVANT; WHAT MATTERS OF COURSE ARE US AUTHORITATIVE STATEMENTS. BUT MODERATE ISRAELIS ARE COUNTING ON US--AND EXTREMIST ISRAELIS ARE SERIOUSLY DOUBTING US WILL--TO PRESS

HARD FOR A MIDDLE EAST PEACE WHICH IS NOT JUST A PIECE OF PAPER,
BUT A PROCESS, INVOLVING ARAB AGREEMENT TO SUCH THINGS AS
COMMENCE WITH ISRAEL AND OTHER SIGNS OF GRADUAL NORMALIZATION
AND RECOGNITION.

4. I THEREFORE HOPE THAT MAGIC WORD "PEACE" WILL ALWAYS BE
PRESENT IN OUR FORMULATIONS AND, TO EXTENT POSSIBLE, INFERENCE
WILL ALSO BE INCLUDED THAT PEACE MUST BE MORE THAN PIECE OF
PAPER.

KEATING

SECRET

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 11 MAY 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PEACE, POLITICAL SITUATION, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, PEACE TALKS, COMMITTEES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973TELAV09391
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: P750020-1580
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731167/abqceksq.tel
Line Count: 67
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 OCT 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <31-Oct-2001 by boyleja>; APPROVED <12-Dec-2001 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US POSTURE ON MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT
TAGS: PFOR, XF, IS, US
To: STATE INFO CAIRO
USUN NY
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005